

*The Prick with the Stick and the City that Hated then Loved Him:
James Joyce, the City of Dublin, and the Imagined Tourist Experience*

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Collier', written in a cursive style.

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Abstract

James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* depicts the Dublin of 1904 in such detail that Joyce was famously quoted as saying that "if the city suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of my book," and it is this city of fiction which literary tourists come to experience in Dublin today. The phenomenon of the imaginary becoming heritage is unique to the literary tourist experience, and it is one that keeps the modern city of Dublin situated in the nostalgic past. Joyce harbored ambivalent feelings in his lifetime towards the city of his birth, and Dublin reciprocated until recent decades; now it embraces and exploits its most famous son. I examine the history of the complicated relationship between Joyce and Dublin as it plays out through the complex systems of literary tourism, ultimately exploring the opposing academic and non-academic enthusiast communities occurring within the city of Dublin today.

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Touring Dublin in 2010, I noticed traces of James Joyce and his literature everywhere: drink coasters, food menus, cultural centers, and eventually, the most perplexing of all, tourism heritage plaques. Typically, such plaques adorn buildings and residences where prominent figures were born or lived for a period of time, but these plaques were for the Ormond's mention in the "Sirens" chapter of Joyce's novel *Ulysses* and for the house that is the birthplace of Leopold Bloom, the main but very fictional character in the novel. Thus, a heritage site was made from a fictional event. Fascinated by such an interesting concept, I returned to Dublin in the summer of 2011 and began to uncover the complex and intricate connections between Joyce, the city of Dublin and the tourist experience. In the pages that follow, I will explore how Joyce used Dublin, how Dublin uses Joyce, and the consequences of such exploitation. First, I will discuss Joyce's complex relationship with Dublin in his lifetime and how those feelings of ambivalence resulted in *Ulysses*. Second, I will examine Dublin's connection to Joyce and the city's gradual acceptance of him. Thirdly, I will analyze the complex systems of literary tourism as they play out in this unique relationship between the Irish capital and its not-always favorite son. And finally, I will look at the conflict between the academic presence in Dublin and non-academic Dubliners with a passion for Joyce.

James Joyce's relationship with Dublin is complicated. He was quite vocal in his sharp criticism of the city and the culture it represented, and he spent the majority of his life living away from Ireland. But at the same time, he always wrote about Dublin; he

said once to a friend, “There was an English Queen who said that when she died the word ‘Calais’ would be written on her heart. ‘Dublin’ will be written on mine” (qtd. in Cahill 21). With his writing firmly set in Dublin, Joyce’s literature reflects those conflicting feelings of harsh criticism and deep respect. He felt that the city should be known by the global community, as he wrote in a letter to Grant Richards:

I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world. It has been a capital of Europe for thousands of years, it is supposed to be the second city of the British Empire and it is nearly three times as big as Venice. Moreover . . . the expression ‘Dubliner’ seems to me to have some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as ‘Londoner’ and ‘Parisian’ both of which have been used by writers as titles” (*Letters* // 122).

Alternatively, Dublin was not so enthusiastic about the form of attention he chose to give and reciprocated the ambivalent relationship, resisting and refusing to include Joyce in its heritage for years but now embracing him and celebrating him as a treasured Irish icon.

Born in Dublin in 1882, James Joyce found himself growing up at a time of great social unrest, political turmoil, and the struggle to create a new Irish identity. Ireland had striven for independence from England, both politically and culturally, for centuries. The Irish Literary Revival, led by Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats, looked to Ireland’s Gaelic roots in pursuing a new Irish cultural identity. Joyce thought that the past was not where writers and artists should draw inspiration but should instead look forward into new forms and narratives. He saw the country as paralyzed, and leapt at the opportunity to

illustrate it when asked by George Russell to submit a short story to *The Irish Homestead* in 1904. Joyce went on to write 15 stories in total, naming the collection “*Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city” (*Letters* 55). He believed that in order to spark the kind of cultural development that would set them apart from the English there needed to be a wake-up call to the Irish that called attention to such cultural powerlessness. Joseph Kelly notes how Joyce “wanted his art to have the kind of persuasive effect on readers that we today consider rhetorical as opposed to literary. His weapon--not yet silence, exile, or cunning--was an uncompromising, unromantic, hard-featured realism” (9), but it was this “hard-featured realism” which caused publishers to deny him publication. In an oft-quoted letter to Grant Richards, Joyce wrote, “I seriously believe that you will retard the course of civilization in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely-polished looking-glass” (*Letters* 64). The realistic nature of *Dubliners* made it very difficult to get published: many publishers were scared of the possibility of libel as Joyce had used the names of real people and businesses, while some took offense at his insistence on using “bloody” in three of the stories. It would take him roughly nine years to get it published, and by then he had left Ireland for good and written *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

The Ireland Joyce portrays in *Dubliners* is tragic: many of the characters are poor or jobless, the city is filthy and uninviting, but most importantly every story has the characters trapped in their respective situations, unable to escape. Frozen within their respective lifestyles and frozen within their class all collectively frozen under British rule,

these stories embodied that paralysis Joyce wanted the Irish to finally see. Declan Kiberd phrases it as such:

Each of the stories in *Dubliners* chronicles an abortive attempt at freedom, an attempt which is doomed precisely because it couches itself in the forms and languages of the enemy . . . Each narrative tells a similar tale, of an impulse arrested or else enacted to a point where it becomes self-negating: in either case, the gesture of revolt is fated always to have the old, familiar tyranny inscribed in it. (330)

While critics praised the style of the prose, the public reception of *Dubliners* was expressed through something Joyce hadn't anticipated: "poor sales. In 1915 *Dubliners* sold 499 copies . . . and fewer were sold the following year . . . despite some good reviews, the public was even less encouraging than publishers had been" (Wexler 59). His "nicely-polished looking-glass" did not incite a form of cultural self-awareness as he had hoped but was met instead with disregard and censorship. His somewhat unflattering comments on the late Queen Victoria and her successor King Edward VII, along with his nationalistic views and the instances of "bloody," found *Dubliners* cast in a somewhat negative light. Joyce's next publication, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, fared better, receiving critical and commercial success. But, as Joyce Piell Wexler observes in *Who Paid For Modernism?*, since *Dubliners* wasn't published until 1914 with *Portrait* following behind in 1916,

public support came too late to affect his writing. Discovering that a single word could provoke censorship, he abandoned his original audience and his original aesthetic claims while writing *Ulysses*. Deprived of critical or

popular feedback, he harbored an image of himself as a martyr to his art, persecuted by philistines on Publishers Row. (61)

Wexler argues that the Irish reception of *Dubliners* was the turning point in regards to Joyce's audience: he went from "wide public" to "avant-garde." Joseph Kelly offers a contrasting view, stating instead that Joyce's audience shifted once he came under the influence of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, who "changed Joyce from an Irish writer into an avant-garde, cosmopolitan writer, shucking off his parochial husk to make him serve their literary movement" (9). To Pound and Eliot, whose journal *The Egoist* published *Ulysses* serially, "good writing will be scorned and misunderstood by the multitude" and through their collaboration presented Joyce as "an artist in conversation not with a broad readership but with his peers (other artistic and critical geniuses) or with dead geniuses of the tradition or with no one at all" (71, 73). Kelly elaborates, explaining the comparison perfectly:

Before Pound, Joyce had the reputation of an Irish writer bitterly attacking certain institutions in Dublin with the weapons of realism and satire. But under Pound's influence, he took on the reputation of an international writer exploring the human psyche for the benefit of a tiny number of like-minded literati. (79)

In Kelly's opinion, Joyce's shift in audience was a construct of Pound and Eliot rather than a reaction to his experience with publishers. Or perhaps he turned his focus, as Declan Kiberd suggests, to embrace the oral tradition of the Irish:

[Joyce] knew that his national culture, in which a centuries-old oral tradition was challenged by the onset of print, must take due account of

both processes. *Ulysses* paid a proper homage to its own bookishness, but, caught on the cusp between the world that spoke and the world that read, Joyce tilted finally towards the older tradition. Like all epics, his would only be given its full expression in the act of being read aloud. (355)

Kiberd acknowledges the shift in audience but attributes it to Joyce's desire to compose an epic for Ireland and, in his use of the genre, creates an oral, more sound-oriented text. Ironically, by utilizing the oral tradition, Joyce created a more authentically Irish text more connected to an Irish past than the work that came out of the Literary Revival he so despised. Performed, *Ulysses* becomes accessible to all audiences, even the illiterate. As we shall see, this aspect of Joyce's text is alive in Dublin today.

For whatever reason, Joyce turned away from his condensed realist prose and implemented, as Sean Latham argues in *The Art of Scandal*, a new style of writing that exacted revenge upon Dublin: "*Ulysses* invokes a vast array of names ranging from individuals to businesses to commercial products. Just as he began *Portrait* 'half in anger,' so too Joyce seems to make it explicit in the early pages of *Ulysses* that this is a libelous book out to settle some old scores" (98). Many real people are caricatured in the novel (Oliver St. John Gogarty as Buck Mulligan being the most prominent and famous example) and it can be said that the caricature extends to include the city itself. It is Joyce's explicit use of the real with the thin veil of fiction, or as Claire Culleton calls it, "conditional fictionality," that is "the ultimate revenge, in that it condemns a real person to caricatured fabrication" (107). Joyce would never say that such revenge was his intent, arguing simply "that the text is not defamatory, but is instead merely an accurate representation of the city of Dublin and some of its well-known

institutions” (Latham 96). Seeing himself as attacked and persecuted by Dublin, he immortalized it in his fiction, something the city has been dealing with ever since.

While Joyce was so disgusted with the state of Irish culture that he left his native country for good, Ireland didn’t have the luxury of such an escape, so it cut Joyce out as best it could. The Irish Free State was established in 1922, the same year as the publication of *Ulysses*, and with it came a whole new set of priorities and morals for the country. Julia Carlson notes in the introduction to *Banned in Ireland* that:

in the late twenties and early thirties the Irish Free State was a nation intent on purifying itself, and its people were deeply suspicious of artists and intellectuals . . . the rhetoric of which the majority of the people were swayed was that of Ireland’s priests and politicians, who believed that by purging Ireland of all “indecencies” and foreign influences, they could shape it into a spiritual model for the world. (8)

Prior to the introduction of the Censorship of Publications Board, most censorship was taken into the hands of private citizens who sought to deface or destroy books containing anything “indecent,” which translated to mean anything referring to sexuality. Then the Board, with its inception in 1929, sanctioned and made law this censorship of what was seen as indecent. Ironically, Joyce’s works were never officially banned in his lifetime, but they were subject to unofficial censorship all the same: Writer Mervyn Wall said that “In my early twenties I had bought myself *Dubliners* and *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. One day they disappeared from my bookshelves in my bedroom. I have

no doubt but that my father burnt them” (Carlson 9). In an interview, author Brian Moore discussed that he didn’t read Joyce until he moved away from Ireland and, upon return:

I was very enthused about Joyce. I found that well-educated people just hadn’t read him . . . more people knew about Flann O’Brien than knew James Joyce, which amazed me . . . Joyce was a major Irish writer whom no one knew. My father, who was a great reader, said to me once, “James Joyce is a sewer.” He never read him, but that was the attitude. (Carlson 112)

For years, the only way to obtain a copy of *Ulysses* in Ireland was to buy it in another country and smuggle it in using a different dust jacket. Joyce remained obscure in his native country, but the banning of his epic in the United States and Great Britain made it into more of a sensation worldwide. This was largely due to the fact that:

the book is referred to continually in literary journals. Great numbers of people have read it who, but for the prohibition, would never have heard of it. There are authors and publishers anxious to get their books censored . . . for the sake of advertisement. Every book censored here will become notorious. (AE 126)

Despite his growing popularity among the foreign academics (especially in America), the Irish still regarded Joyce as an enemy, albeit an unspoken one. Debates on whether his work was Protestant or Catholic, or what type of Ireland he represented, only made him more controversial. But most of all, beyond the sexuality of *Ulysses*, it was his use of real people within the text that caused controversy. “At the time it was received with equal choruses of acclaim and hostility, while [in] Dublin, whose citizens, streets, shops,

and language formed the material for the book, it was greeted with embarrassment” (Dublin Writers Museum plaque). The citizens of Dublin did not wish to have the world see the dirty, drunk, and highly sexual characters which exist in the novel as representative of themselves, not to mention that Joyce’s use of real names specifically characterized certain people as such. Richard Ellmann observes how “art lavishes on one man another’s hair, or voice, or bearing, with shocking disrespect for individual identity”; indeed, “a tremor went through quite a few of his countrymen, who feared the part he may have assigned them. ‘Are you in it?’ or ‘Am I in it?’ they asked the few people known to have copies” (374, 544-45). To many, the inclusion in the novel was not a sign of affection to be cherished and touted, but a curse.

It was not until 1962, with the opening of the James Joyce Museum on Bloomsday of that year, that Joyce began to take on an “official role as part of Irish heritage” (Brooker 209). The establishment of the Tower and the James Joyce Tower Society brought more foreign academics to Dublin, and in 1967 the first James Joyce Symposium was held. The academic Joycean pilgrims signaled a partial acceptance by the Irish of their expatriated son, though it wasn’t an easy process. Phillip Herring notes in his review of the Symposium in 1969:

If one considers for a moment the love-hate relationship between Joyce and Ireland, it is difficult to see how our welcome could have been other than a tentative, somewhat embarrassed *stretta di mano*. Ireland could not very well refuse us sanctuary, for Joyce was after all an Irish writer, and more importantly he *is* good business. But Ireland cannot really embrace him (or us) because she does not feel comfortable with him (or us). (3-4)

As Brooker notes, “outrage had turned to mockery, on the long road to toleration” (206), and today Dublin is slowly coming to terms and learning how best to live with Joyce. In the decades that followed, a number of monuments and acknowledgements to Joyce and his work have been erected around Dublin: in 1982 a bust by Marjorie Fitzgibbon was unveiled in St. Stephen’s Green; in 1988 the Anna Livia Millennium Fountain, designed by Eamonn O’Doherty, was erected in the middle of O’Connell Street (with the completion of the Spire of Dublin, it has since been relocated to Croppy Memorial Gardens); Fitzgibbon also sculpted the life-size statue of Joyce that has been situated on North Earl Street since 1990 (called by locals “the prick with the stick”); and, most recently in 2001, Corporation Street was renamed James Joyce Street. Today, Joyce is a large part of the capital’s heritage, and his literature creates a unique tourist space for Dublin.

The tourist space that is the city of Dublin is quite complex because it exists both in the present and in the literary imagination, meaning that the actual literal Dublin is the physical location for the exploration of the Dublin that exists on paper. This is a phenomenon unique to literary tourism, and in turn creates an intricate network of the real and imaginary. The concept of literary tourism, or the act of visiting a site because of its connection to a piece of writing or an author, is different than other kinds of tourism: unlike visiting a heritage site in Dublin, such as Christchurch Cathedral, where it is grounded in history and visually appealing, the literary tourist visits locations that

may only have significance as the sites of events depicted in fiction, or for their connection to the author's life. This crossover between present reality and the fictionalized world of literature (the crossover being a real location featured or mentioned within a text) creates a hybrid reality of imagined experience. That is to say that because of the sites' presence within fact and fiction, the lines between them become blurred. Robinson and Anderson describe it as "the nebulous boundary between fiction and reality," going on to say that:

the lack of distinction between the real and the imagined within the literary form is one of its distinguishing features. Readers are allowed to cruise the real world within their imagination and to fuel their imagination through glimpses, representations and deliberate distortions of reality. (11)

Literary tourism takes this one step further by viewing a real location through the lens of the literary world created in the mind. The physical spaces of the literary tourist are therefore locations of a hybrid reality of imagined experience. Dublin lends itself well to this kind of tourism, one which blends fact with fiction, because that is exactly what Joyce did in *Ulysses*. As Sean Latham points out:

This use of real names and places, in fact, accounts for some of the peculiar pleasures of Joyce's text, encouraging readers not only to track references to real people and places in the 1904 Thom's Directory but to follow the fictional paths of Bloom and Stephen minute by minute and step by step as they make their way through Dublin. (92)

Ulysses, through its highly-detailed depiction of Dublin, combines fact with fiction to create a city that is a neo-fictional space. Joyce uses the geography of the real city as

the environment for his characters while they carry out certain events that happened in Joyce's own life, creating a space that recognizes moments both on the page and in real life and thus encourages the conflation of reality and literature.

The blurring of fact and fiction into an imagined experience leads to the complete disregard of the present in favor of an "authentic" experience of this imagined past. The past, especially the past illustrated by Joyce in *Ulysses*, is looked upon by the tourist with nostalgia and is seen as a desirable experience, and thus the past is "recreated" in the present. Sites are preserved or certain elements maintained to support this sense of the past while other elements thrive solely in the imagination of the viewer, and it is the prominence of such hybrid locations within the city that create something of an identity crisis for Dublin. The desire for nostalgia creates conflict, as explained by Susan Stewart:

Nostalgia is always ideological: the past it seeks has never existed except as narrative, and hence, always absent, that past continually threatens to reproduce itself as a felt lack. Hostile to history and its invisible origins, and yet longing for an impossibly pure context of lived experience at a place of origin, nostalgia wears a distinctly utopian face, a face that turns toward a future-past, a past which has only ideological reality. This point of desire which the nostalgic seek is in fact the absence that is the very generating mechanism of desire . . . nostalgia is the desire for desire. (23)

Tourists come not to see the Dublin of today, but the specific Dublin of yesterday that is more commonly referred to as "Joyce's Dublin." Joyce's Dublin is an exaggerated, highly romanticized version of the Dublin of 1904 found in *Ulysses*, deriving from the

images and atmosphere of modern-day Bloomsday celebrations: men in Edwardian suits and boater hats riding bikes through the sunshine and women in dresses listening to concerts in St. Stephen's Green all wrapped up in an air of whimsical playtime and romance. When it isn't the month of June, some of the businesses mentioned in the novel which still exist contribute to what some may consider to be the "recreation" of this nostalgic past: Davy Byrne's keeps a gorgonzola sandwich on the menu for the literary tourist hungry for the "authentic" experience of dining in such a "moral pub"; Sweny's Chemist at 1 Lincoln Place looks much like it did in 1904 and visitors can still purchase bars of lemon soap just as Bloom did in "Lotuseaters"; and until the hotel closed a few years ago, the Ormond Hotel's bar was appropriately named 'Sirens Lounge.' Locations that have long since been unused or neighborhoods that are derelict and visually unappealing are sites of Joycean tours, calling attention to struggling areas typically not within the tourist gaze and to locations that no longer exist because they have since been demolished. The Dublin of today is a vehicle for experiencing Joyce's 1904, a tenuous part of the city's identity and a point Brooker explores in *Joyce's Critics*:

Dublin seems to become rewritten as a pale imitation of a work of fiction. As early as 1937 Neil Sheridan remarked that Dublin was starting to feel like 'an inferior plagiarism from *Ulysses*' . . . Alternatively, one could say that the contemporary commemoration of *Ulysses* allows Joyce's novel to recode the city, charging its everyday sites with esoteric significance, producing a surfeit of meaning that hovers just out of view, traceable only by the costumed figures going through the motions . . . Bloomsday has transformed Joyce's book into an epic subtext for the real. (211-12)

Thus, Joyce's novel places Dublin's identity in conflict: the city must constantly exist in the past in order to live up to those wishing to re-live that past in the present. Dublin is in a sense "frozen in time," a prisoner of "fictional representation" and unable to move forward from what some Dubliners may believe are "outmoded factual and fictional images" (Robinson 56). It seems that, with the growing popularity of the Joycean machine and increasing attendance rates, the city continues to return to a Joycean image of itself through the tourism structure: in pamphlets for the city and institutions within it, often a descriptive quote from *Ulysses* will appear; the Dublin Literary Pub Crawl is peppered with various descriptions straight from the text; many pubs and businesses will showcase their mention in the novel on anything from menus to coasters to room names to special Joyce-inspired dishes. By describing and identifying itself through Joyce and his work, the city he so wished to free from its own cultural immobility is, ironically, paralyzed. Dublin cannot define itself in the present or even in reality because it constantly turns with a nostalgic gaze to a neo-fictional past created by the shadow cast by the Joycean image.

Alternatively, it could be said that Dublin, rather than being paralyzed, benefits from its conscious exploitation of *Ulysses* as a heritage product, that the city decided to market its Joycean past. Rather than the shadow of Joyce hanging over the city like a curse, Joyce's Dublin, according to this line of thought, is a product of the capital's own creation. On the whole it is rural Ireland, the scenic landscapes and the beautiful green countryside, that is the main tourist draw for the country. Dublin wasn't until recently seen as "a place meriting special attention. Its role as capital has seldom counted as a matter of any material consequence, still less, as a 'locus' of Irish culture in which

people should have pride” (Lincoln 205). Historically, the city has done little in the way of preserving its architecture; architectural historian Dan Cruickshank stated in an article for *The Independent* that “no European city has done more in recent years to destroy its architectural heritage” (qtd. in Lincoln 204). Blocks of perfectly stable Georgian buildings were demolished for commercial development throughout the twentieth century, while the demolition of houses on Eccles Street (including the famous No. 7) made way for the expansion of the visually unappealing Mater Hospital. On the other end of the scale, many once handsome structures have been deserted and fallen into a deteriorated state. As the chief architect of the Finnish Ministry of the Environment pointed out in a letter to *The Irish Times*:

It is difficult to express my disappointment and sad feelings as I saw the horrifying state of buildings and the streetscape . . . I don't think I have anywhere else seen so many beautiful buildings--and right in the centre--left empty, left in the hands of vandals and weather. It looked like Dublin's historic core was left to rot. (qtd. in Lincoln 204)

But then in the 1980s the city experienced immense economic decline and the need to market itself as an attraction for tourists became increasingly important. The decision was made in the late 1980s to aggressively promote the rich literary and other artistic traditions within the city, a point noted by the chairman of Bord Fáilte, the Dublin Tourism Board: “There is a potential to attract new visitors through Irish literature . . . but it is not just a matter of telling potential visitors about our heritage--the need is to package and present the heritage in a form that makes it attractive to buy” (qtd. in Lincoln 218). This strategy yielded the explosion of events surrounding Bloomsday,

statues and busts of Joyce popping up throughout the city, and the establishment in 1994 of the James Joyce Centre at 35 North Great George's Street. Today, Bloomsday has transformed into a Bloomsweek, a week-long event, complete with lectures, concerts, breakfasts and afternoon teas, and bike and bus tours in addition to numerous walking tours, many of the events for a fee. The economic machine that is Joyceana is ever growing and the commercial value of his work and name is evident throughout the city as shops, restaurants, hotels, pubs, and various cultural centers highlight a connection to the man and his work or, if none is present, use Joycean elements to claim a connection. But beyond his market value, Joyce's novel places meaning on the unglamorous parts of Dublin through the tourist gaze and thus draws attention both to and away from what would often be looked upon as unsightly areas that needed to be cleaned up. In this way, the city exploits the hybrid reality of an imagined experience: the literary tourist does not see the derelict neighborhoods of the present but the setting of a story in *Dubliners*; they see the opticians Yeates and Son and not the boarded up shop at the corner of Nassau Street and Grafton Street. Dublin uses Joyce to make up for not preserving much of its architectural history because in the imagined tourist gaze, Joyce's Dublin is what is seen beyond the "dear dirty Dublin" of the present.

It could be said, then, that instead of the fiction holding the city back from realizing its own present and future, Dublin and *Ulysses* operate as circular simulacrum, one perpetuating the other. "For Plato, the simulacrum is a copy of a copy . . . its untruth is defined by its distance from the original and by its exposure of the scandal that an imitation can in turn function as a reality to be copied (and so on endlessly)" (Frow 68). The Dublin of 1904 was the original that Joyce then took and characterized in *Ulysses*

in such a way that Dublin now serves as the copy of its own representation in the novel.

Frow explains how this circumstance operates in a positive light:

The world we inhabit is one in which identity is simulated in the play of difference and repetition, but this simulation carries no sense of loss. Instead, freeing ourselves of the Platonic ontology means denying the priority of an original over the copy, of a model over the image. It means glorifying the reign of simulacrum, and affirming that any original is itself already a copy, divided in its very origin. (68)

Looked at in this way, Dublin is not “an inferior plagiarism” but simply one part of this ongoing cycle of simulacrum. As one perpetuates the other, there is no conflict between the city of reality and the city of the imagination and “the representation of Joyce in Dublin is thus not only a matter of preserving the archive but of producing new representations and tributes: the tide of Joyceana rises” (Brooker 209). The Dublin of reality needs Joyce’s Dublin to attract tourists and form sites of heritage throughout a city that has a history of not preserving its historic architecture, especially with much of the tourist gaze turned towards the rural Ireland. Joyce’s Dublin needs the Dublin of reality to operate as the physical space for readers and tourists to follow in the footsteps of the characters of *Ulysses*, thus reiterating Joyce’s prolific use of detail (As Robert Nicholson has said, “The city of Dublin . . . is the most valuable document we have to help us appreciate the intricate craftsmanship of *Ulysses*” (vii)) and therefore regenerating his reputation as a masterful writer. These two versions of Dublin, one a copy of the other, need and feed off of the other: the symbiotic relationship gives

primacy to both. Dublin is, then, a kind of double city, with the blanket of Joyce's Dublin laid gently over the Dublin of reality.

Today within the double city of Dublin, there are two distinct types of Joycean sites: those that are institutions specifically established for the promotion of Joyce and Joycean education and those that exist as real businesses with a Joycean connection. The people who populate these locations are quite divided, mainly based on their impression of Joyce and how they believe he should be represented in Dublin. There are those who hail him as a genius and believe that he should be revered and studied as such with his works on a pedestal, while there are those who believe he is just a man from Dublin who wrote a great book, a book that is accessible to everyone. These two Joycean camps create conflict within the literary tourist structure of Dublin, providing two very different kinds of tourist experience. Through the examples of the James Joyce Center and Sweny's Chemist, I hope to show that the original hostility between Joyce and Ireland has been regenerated by the academy and the Joycean readers of Dublin into a new modern battleground for the claiming of Joyce.

Situated at no. 35 North Great George's Street, the location of the dance studio of Professor Denis J Maginni, the James Joyce Centre was opened in 1994. It is promoted and advertised by Bord Fáilte, offering the casual visitor a brief immersion into Joyce and *Ulysses*, or the enthusiast a chance to come into contact with objects or facsimiles of objects from Joyce's life. Established so there would be a Joycean cultural

center within the city of Dublin, the Centre is operated by various authorities on Joyce, many having published articles or books on him, while those running the desk and giving the tours are graduate students whose studies relate to the author in some way. There is a sense of reverence towards Joyce throughout the Centre, but also of intellectual superiority over visitors. While the main goal is to educate visitors, there is the impression that the Centre, and the academic machine that is behind it, stands to intimidate them. Upon entering the room at the top of the restored Georgian house, the visitor encounters a recreation of a cramped, crowded bedroom with this quote written on the wall beside it:

James Joyce did not write *Ulysses* hidden away in a private study, in an atmosphere of solitary grandeur. Instead, he worked wherever he could find space in the noisy, lively domestic environment of the apartments he shared with his wife Nora and their two children. *Ulysses* was written in rented accommodation in Trieste, Zurich, and Paris, Joyce turning each of these cluttered, intimate, family spaces into the workshop of a genius.

(James Joyce Centre plaque)

This quote implies that Joyce was such a genius, he could take an environment full of the chaos of a family, an environment in which most would find unsuitable to work, and write a landmark novel. It elevates his accomplishments as a writer even further and places him on another plane above the visitor, much like the imaginary exchange from Tom Stoppard's play *Travesties*, which is prominently featured on the wall at the Centre:

"What did you do in the Great War?"

"I wrote *Ulysses*, what did you do?"

The visitor then walks past the bedroom to an open space featuring quotes from his novels and four touch-screen modules. Two are dedicated to Joyce's life and, though brief, would realistically take an hour to read through from start to finish. The other two revolve around *Ulysses*. These modules go through the episodes of the novel, explaining each through a complex web of maps, Odyssean parallels, colors, human organs, and styles. While it may be helpful to a reader or scholar of *Ulysses*, it gives the impression that to read and understand it requires a guidebook. This was the opposite of Joyce's intentions, who, during the obscenity trial in America, objected to a chart being published in the book because "the presence of the chart would indicate to potential buyers that *Ulysses* was a certain type of book-- the type normal people do not buy" (Kelly 136). Or, as Paul Leon reported "an American reader seeing the chart [might conclude] that since he has to study it before reading it is not worthwhile reading the book" (qtd. in Kelly 135). To properly explore the modules would take hours and, if one hasn't read *Ulysses*, much of the provided connections and explanations are meaningless. By throwing this surfeit of information at the visitor, the Centre conveys that the text is inaccessible without the key and that the key is impenetrable to the layman.

The James Joyce Centre is now the hub of Joycean activity in the Dublin city centre and organizes the main, "official" events for the week of Bloomsday. Many of these events carry the air of a high society function, such as afternoon tea at the Westin or the numerous lectures on Joyce. One of the lectures for Bloomsweek 2011 was conducted by Carlos Gammoro, the topic being James Joyce and Jorge Luis Borges. Having never read Borges (who is also a darling child of academia), I have to admit that

much of the lecture went over my head, although I was able to process the large portion of the talk which was about how Borges worshipped *Ulysses* and was greatly inspired by Joyce. I felt quite alienated at the lecture, mainly because of my lack of exposure to Borges, and I was taken aback by the very limited number of people the lecture was addressing. In order to attain the sort of insight that is typically the result of a lecture, one had to have read not only Joyce, but Borges as well. It was not the sort of event that makes everyone feel welcome; it discourages readers who may not have academic training or the mindset of a literary critic. This academic snobbery is the continuation of a tradition established by Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot while Joyce was writing *Ulysses*, as Joseph Kelly discusses in *Our Joyce*:

In the 1930s Morris Ernst, who defended *Ulysses* in its celebrated obscenity trials, . . . discovered that his best defense was to promote Pound's and Eliot's Joyce, because the law believed that elevated, isolated, geniuses were incapable of obscenity. This judicial attitude . . . depends on a peculiar characterization of the relationship between a writer and readers. The "classic"--for so books by geniuses were labeled-- is incomprehensible except to a safe coterie of educated and wealthy readers . . . Woolsey's famous decision in 1933 gained Joyce a wider circulation, but at the price of a reputation that continued to strip his work of the ability to affect people, for if readers cannot be aroused neither can they be rescued from a disabling ideology. (10)

Today, this sense of *Ulysses* being for specialist readers persists among many contemporary Dubliners. As one Dubliner told me, the book is "meant more for scholars

and people who might want a challenge” than for “someone like me” (Personal Interview 30 May 2011).

Of course, not everyone in Dublin has adopted this attitude; in fact, there are certain thriving communities of Joyce readers throughout the city who come together to read and share and celebrate the author in their own way. The most prominent location of the kind is Sweny’s Chemist. With a respect and love for Joyce, those who lead readers through his works caution them not to take him or his work too seriously. As one regular at the readings at Sweny’s commented, “here, [*Ulysses*] is accessible versus putting it on a pedestal with a reverence of academic purity. Here people can laugh or be confused or whatever, while at the James Joyce Centre it feels intimidating and stale and hushed” (Personal Interview 11 June 2011). Prominent in the Joycean eye due to the recurring image of the soap Bloom purchases there (“Mr Bloom raised a cake to his nostrils. Sweet lemony wax. --I’ll take this one” (*U* 69)), the Sweny’s Chemist still stands at 1 Lincoln Place, and has changed little in the past 100 years. It is no longer a fully-functioning chemist, but those who frequent it don’t seem to mind. In 2009, the women running Sweny’s as a chemist retired and, within a few months, it was taken over by volunteers who keep it open for Joycean pilgrims and enthusiastic readers. The shop now sells a handful of minor toiletries in addition to used books, jewelry, and most importantly, lemon soap. The interior hasn’t changed much since the turn of the twentieth century, which adds to its appeal on the Joycean trail. The charm of the shop and the passion of the volunteers make it a warm and inviting place to discuss and read Joyce’s work while enjoying a cup of tea. While some of the volunteers are professors at University College Dublin or in the academic realm, there is a humility about the place

that makes it seem anything but intimidating. There are two weekly *Ulysses* reading groups, one on Saturday morning and one Thursday evening, and daily readings of *Dubliners* at 1pm, and those in attendance range from Dubliners, literary tourists, and the casually-interested tourist or passerby. The reading groups are intimate and down-to-earth: each opens with a recap and introduction into the next episode before whomever is leading the group starts to read, sending along the responsibility of reading around the room. No one is obligated to read, and no one is criticized for not completely understanding something (On a recent evening, everyone had their moments of, "What the . . . ?" during the "Circe" episode). It is a relaxing environment that allows fellow admirers of Joyce's work to appreciate and better understand his texts, but also welcomes new readers to read and enjoy without feeling intimidated. One of the most common things said by those who attend the reading group is that they had been scared of *Ulysses*, had tried to read it but stopped in the third episode, and then heard about the Sweny's group and now love it. They love hearing it read aloud and appreciate the novel so much more. This act of oral presentation of *Ulysses* returns to Declan Kiberd's comment about how the novel would "only be given its full expression in the act of being read aloud" (355). For many attendees of the reading groups, when they first read silently and alone, the novel left them baffled and they didn't want to continue; it is the shared act of reading that brings about understanding and appreciation of the text, not a complex chart or guidebook.

In looking at these two different locations, the question of authenticity is raised.

Authenticity on its own is a difficult concept because the tourist desires an object or place to be authentic but, in labeling it as authentic, the object or place loses its authenticity. Frow states that the object is inseparable “from its semiotic status”, meaning that “the valued object is, minimally, a sign of itself, and hence . . . *resembles itself*” (73). This creates a paradox, which in turn leads to more paradoxes. Handler and Linnekin explain in terms of tradition:

One of the major paradoxes of the ideology of tradition is that attempts at cultural preservation inevitably alter, reconstruct, or invent the traditions that they are intended to fix. Traditions are neither genuine nor spurious, for if genuine tradition refers to the pristine and immutable heritage of the past, then all genuine traditions are spurious. But if, as we have argued, tradition is always defined in the present, then all spurious traditions are genuine. (qtd. in Frow 77)

In terms of literary tourism, the idea of what is genuine is a bit more complicated due to its grounding in fiction. With literary tourism, the tourist desires to see the past as the author captured it on paper, and thus “the past is reworked through different economies of value” (Frow 79). They crave not the authentic but what is seen as a genuine representation through the nostalgic gaze. In terms of *Ulysses*, it could be said that the entire city is genuinely related to the novel in the tourist sense, but it could also be argued that there are locations that hold more literary weight. These locations, be it businesses or buildings of note, are mentioned directly in the novel and are thus considered “central.” There are then other locations that derive their literary significance

tangentially due to being the real-life home of a character mentioned in the novel or that has claimed the name of someone or something prominent in the novel. These places are considered “peripheral.”

What is so fascinating about these two very different locations is their place within the tourist experience. The James Joyce Centre is a staged and constructed form of experience. It is, in a sense, a tourist space that was made to facilitate the education of visitors. As Frow observes, though, “tourist space differs from itself. Reflexively divided into a displayed authentic place and an accessory (but often overlaid) metaspace where the business of tourism is conducted, it approximates the empty non-places of the postmodern chronotype,” non-places meaning “sites of a memory which is disconnected from the present and of a history which has since been transformed into actuality and spectacle” (75). That is to say that the tourist metaspace is separate, functioning as the location where the tourist buys a ticket and then visits, observes, and learns about the authentic space before going into it. In this way, the James Joyce Centre is simply an accessory to experiencing Joyce’s Dublin, a pure metaspace. It is only a metaspace because, unlike the hundreds of locations mentioned by name within *Ulysses*, 35 North Great Georges Street is only marginally related: the real-life Professor Denis J Maginni, his fictional twin prominent in the “Wandering Rocks” episode, had his dance studio in the back room on the ground floor. This detail, however, is not mentioned in the novel. Therefore it is “peripheral.” Still, the fact that the real Maginni had a studio in the building is noted at the beginning of all the tours from

the Centre, which comes across as a desire to assert itself as a piece of the “central,” as a real part of Joyce’s Dublin and not just a part of the “peripheral” and serving as a metaspace for tourism.

Sweny’s, on the other hand, holds a “central” connection and thus only has to explain its Joycean connection to the casually-interested. Operating as chemist up until two years ago, it now carries the elements of a preserved tradition, versus the tourist metaspace of the Centre. Today the shop looks as it did when it opened in 1853, thus “reconstructing” the past in the present as it participates as a “central” location in Joyce’s Dublin. Unlike the James Joyce Centre, Sweny’s is a landmark because of its mention in *Ulysses*, being a popular stop on the literary pilgrim’s journey with the purchase a bar of lemon soap just as Leopold Bloom did in the novel. Within the tourist gaze, it is more “genuine” because it was not established to educate the public--there is no “non-place,” such as the Centre-- but Sweny’s now operates as a representation of Joyce’s representation. Frow observes that “the ongoing reconstruction of the past is an act not only of recontextualization but of invention, and that even the most ‘authentic’ traditions are thus effects of a stylized simulation” (77). Sweny’s creates a nostalgic experience for visitors where they can replicate the actions of the novel: a visitor can walk in and see the shop much like Joyce and Bloom saw it and buy a bar of lemon soap wrapped in parchment paper. To the literary tourist, this “process of repetition and reenactment” is a large part of “the reenchantment of a certain prescribed period” (Brooker 202). In other words, Sweny’s is a neo-fictional space that caters to the literary tourist’s desire for nostalgia and, therefore, Joyce’s Dublin.

Between these two institutions, there exists a mutual hostility. The official, academics-only tours from the James Joyce Centre walk right past Sweny's, not allowing those who don't know better to buy a bar of lemon soap or even acknowledging the existence of the Chemist. The reason for this attitude isn't clear, though it could be assumed that they don't approve of the casual approach Sweny's takes on *Ulysses* and its author. The hostility Sweny's feels towards them comes partly from this treatment, and partly from the Centre's representation of Joyce. To those who frequent the shop, they look at the Centre as a place where they aren't welcome, where *Ulysses*, which they consider to be a book of the people (the people being Dubliners), is placed on this high pedestal intended to keep it out of reach from those who consider it as just another book. In her travel guide *Literary Tour of Ireland*, Elizabeth Healy typifies this stance towards academics, noting, "Joyce's writings have given rise to such an immense literary industry that even to enter into that vast field is presumptuous, and superfluous" (205), and this attitude is definitely present among the company at Sweny's, seeing academics as "laboratory scientists reading texts with such specialized equipment that they have murdered to dissect, so to speak, and so missed the jokes" (Kelly 204). To those at Sweny's, it doesn't matter if one has published a library of Joycean criticism and read the novel 50 times or if one has never heard of Joyce; everyone is equal at the shop and everyone shares their own knowledge and experience so as to better enrich the experience of the rest. Many like-minded people across Dublin have adopted this attitude that Phillip Herring captures in his review of the Second International James Joyce Symposium:

“Well, let the joke be on somebody else,” Ireland says. “For our part we will honor him publicly for the profit he brings us, but we reserve the right to be suspicious, and if when all the deciphering and annotation is done Joyce turns out to be the fraud we think he is, then we’ll say we told you so and you can hide your blushes as best you may.” (4)

This view is still in place today as Dubliners take part in Bloomsday celebrations and laugh at the academics parading around as if they have more of a right to celebrate than anyone else.

The hostility between the academics and lay enthusiasts could be seen as a confrontation between two distinct versions of Joyce. Much like the Joyce who wished to live away from Ireland, the academics desire to be separate from the rest of Irish society. Indeed, within Dublin they have already separated themselves: 35 North Great Georges Street is on the north side of the Liffey beyond Parnell Square, which is right at the edge of where tourists venture. If people are in the area, they either live there or are there for the Centre; it is not in a place where one may casually stroll in out of curiosity after walking by. In this situation, the academics take the role of Joyce the Genius, the “alienated artist [in] an oppositional relationship to bourgeois society” (Wexler xiii). It is a certain level of hero worship that elevates Joyce into a position of sainthood, where the academics are the priests in the Church of Joyce, and must therefore isolate themselves as well. In this sense it is only logical that the academics would have a hostile attitude towards anyone who portrays Joyce as anything other than a genius.

Sweny’s is naturally on the other end of this, projecting an image of a Joyce of the people, an author whose main audience was, according to Kelly, Dublin’s middle

class (9). They promote the Joyce of *Dubliners*, a man who wrote for his people. To those at Sweny's, they believe that the academics have no right to claim Joyce because he wrote for the people of Ireland and that to pick *Ulysses* apart is to lose a large portion of its meaning. The fact that this divide between Joyce enthusiasts exists and that their versions of him are so varied is due to the ambiguity of his intentions. Throughout the process of writing and publishing *Dubliners*, Joyce was explicit about his intentions, writing often and in abundance ("you will retard the course of civilization in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely-polished looking-glass"). But with the shift in his style that occurred after *Dubliners* and *Portrait* came the silencing of his clear intentions, and the truth is that no one really knows what Joyce intended with *Ulysses*. This leaves the discussion wide open for scholars and readers to speculate just what he was thinking or for whom he was writing. There is some evidence that he wanted *Ulysses* to be a book for all people, as the case of the obscenity trial in the United States makes clear ("the presence of the chart would indicate to potential buyers that *Ulysses* was a certain type of book-- the type normal people do not buy"); scholars also interpret this as Joyce knowing that *Ulysses* required some sort of guide, arranging for others to "provide the exegesis" (Wexler 63). Either way, because Joyce never wrote explicitly about his intentions for *Ulysses* the way he wrote about *Dubliners*, the versions of him and *Ulysses* that exist are the products of the interpretations of his letters and his work. Because of this, Joyce can be both a genius to the academics who worship him and a man to the non-academic Dubliners who read and love his work, thus creating a hostile combat zone for who claims him.

In a way, Declan Kiberd's observation, that Joyce's use of the oral tradition made for a novel that is both bookish and meant to be read aloud, places Joyce in both arenas: in writing *Ulysses* he made a novel that could be enjoyed by academics *and* nonacademics. The existence of such hostilities proves this. Through the act of reading aloud, anyone from the illiterate to the scholarly can derive pleasure from the novel while at the same time, academics have written books upon books on the most intricate details of a single episode. *Ulysses* can be funny but it can also be quite serious and, looked at in this way, Joyce is a genius of the people. By straddling both identities, Joyce is truly an Irish writer, just as *Ulysses*, which embraces both scholarly and oral interpretations, truly is an Irish novel.

For the city of Dublin, a healthy relationship with Joyce lies in the acceptance of this dual-vision of the author as a genius of the people. It acknowledges the mind involved in writing such a landmark novel that so masterfully captures the city on paper, but it also allows him to be a man whose primary audience is the Irish people. In order for such a relationship to be possible, the academic community must accept that they do not have ultimate authority over Joyce and learn to share him with the non-academics of the city. At the same time, the non-academics will have to accept that there is a large academic industry that analyzes and discusses Joyce's work. If it could be conveyed that neither one undermines the other and that both the academics and the nonacademics share a love and respect for Joyce, perhaps the hostility which permeates Dublin will subside. It would create a Joycean community that would promote an accessible yet brilliant Joyce, providing an environment that would

encourage new readers and fostering a better experience of *Ulysses* both through the act of reading and through the physical act of walking through Dublin.

Through his novels, James Joyce presented Dublin to the world. He put Dublin on the literary map, capturing it in such vivid detail that every year readers come to see Joyce's Dublin, participating in a tourist experience that is a hybrid reality of imagined experience. This kind of tourism evokes a nostalgia for the fictional Dublin of 1904, constantly keeping the city in a cycle of defining itself through the lens of *Ulysses* as the *Ulysses* gives primacy to a city that has a history of not preserving its architectural heritage. Tourists come to walk in the footsteps of Leopold Bloom, tracing the routes of characters and repeating their actions throughout the city, visiting both existing and absent sites along the way. While the capital initially opposed such tourist activity, it now welcomes it, celebrating its famous son every year on the 16th of June. The conflict that existed in Joyce's lifetime and the animosity that Dublin felt in the decades that followed has since faded away; today it is the representation of and claim on Joyce that sparks hostility between the academic community and the non-academic Dubliners. But in the fair city of Dublin, perhaps the novel that put the capital on the map and was met with such ambivalence by its citizens will be what harmonizes a conflict it initially created. Through the process of reading *Ulysses* aloud, the Joyceans within Dublin, both academic and non, can take part in a centuries-old Irish tradition as they celebrate a man genius enough to utilize it.

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